

September 7, 1961

Mr. Richard J. Hughes
26 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey

Dear Judge Hughes:

Your letter of August 18th greeted me on my return to my desk yesterday from vacation. I regret very much this delay in acknowledging your note of comment and inquiry.

Please understand, first, that the data prepared by me at Mr. Mitchell's request had absolutely no partisan motivation on my part, and was given absolutely no partisan or political inference or implications by me. My business is, and has been throughout my adult life, the battle for civil rights and equality of opportunity. It was to this alone that I addressed my statement, and no individual, official or Party was held up for criticism, either directly or by implication.

Most certainly, there has been progress in New Jersey, I can become almost maudlin in recounting the improvements that have occurred in our State in a quarter of a century. However, sentimental journeys into the past are not serving the cause of progress today nor cooling the hot impatience of those still being denied the right of full membership participation in the progress of the human family. Every new recognition of a group's leadership; every added legislative act or judicial edict designed to strengthen the concept of man's right to human dignity; every positive act of an administrator in public life or private corporation to implement these ideals, is another step toward the realization of every man's dream of freedom. These are things we should expect, and demand; being satisfied with nothing less. These principles transcend partisan political considerations.

I wish it were possible to reach such a simple determination that one could say "one Party has seen all weaknesses and met all challenges; another Party has some none of these things."

As a very critical observer of the political scene, I find it is not so simple. Both have accomplished; both have left behind vast areas of neglect. It is the neglect in all instances with which my factual statement was concerned.

Please forgive me if these generalizations fail to deal specifically with your more pointed questions.

Sincerely,

Harold A. Lett, Associate Director
National Program Development
For Labor-Management Services

RICHARD J. HUGHES
26 WEST STATE STREET
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

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August 18, 1961

Dr. Harold A. Lett
National Conference of Christians and Jews
43 West 57th Street
New York, New York

Dear Dr. Lett:

I noticed with interest press reports concerning your reply to a letter by Mr. James P. Mitchell.

I regard your criticism of tendencies toward "subtle discrimination" in public employment as certainly worthy of investigation. If elected Governor, I shall do my utmost to assure full opportunity to all citizens of New Jersey.

Meanwhile, I, too, would like to pose several questions to you:

Has there been a real improvement in the attitude of the administration and affiliated governmental agencies toward minorities?

Have Governor Meyner's appointments to the Judiciary and other policy-making posts been precedent-setting in New Jersey government?

Has it been the Democratic Assembly of the last four years or the Republican Senate which has done more to assure equality for all groups? I refer, for example, to the S-1 and A-12 housing bills, and A-684, which outlaws discrimination by all public contractors and suppliers.

I also would appreciate your comments on the civil rights activities by the present administration in Washington, as compared with the efforts in this area by the predecessor administration of which Mr. Mitchell was a member.

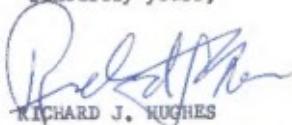
Dr. Harold A. Lett

August 18, 1961

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Thank you in advance for your interest.

Sincerely yours,



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Hughes".

RICHARD J. HUGHES

August 21, 1961

Mr. Richard J. Hughes
28 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Hughes:

Your letter of August 18th addressed to Dr. Harold A. Lett was received during his absence from the office. When he returns to his desk on September 5th, I will bring it to his attention.

Cordially yours,

(Miss) Marie Solari
Secretary to Dr. Harold Lett